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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ADDIS ABABA 000287

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/FO, AF/RSA, AF/S, AF/E, AF/W, AF/C, AND PM
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNP](#) [UNGA](#) [UNSC](#) [NI](#) [AU](#)
SUBJECT: AU SUMMIT -- U.S. DELEGATION MEETS WITH AU
CHAIRPERSON JEAN PING

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 279
[1](#)B. ADDIS ABABA 275

Classified By: USAU Ambassador Michael Battle for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

This message is from USAU Ambassador Michael Battle.

[1](#)1. (U) January 31, 2010; 7:00 p.m.; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

[1](#)2. (U) Participants:

U.S.
Under Secretary Maria Otero
Assistant Secretary Johnnie Carson
NSC Senior Director for African Affairs Michelle Gavin
Special Envoy for Sudan Scott Gration
Special Advisor on the Great Lakes Howard Wolpe
Deputy Special Advisor Jim Yellin
USAID Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator Earl Gast
USAU Ambassador Michael A. Battle
Special Advisor Nicole Goldin
Special Assistant Caroline Mauldin
Special Assistant Akunna Cook
USAU A/DCM Joel Maybury
USAU Military Advisor Duke Ellington
USAU Political/Public Diplomacy Officer Lauren Ladenson
(notetaker)

African Union
Chairperson Jean Ping
Peace and Security Commissioner Ramtane Lamamra
NEPAD Executive Director

[1](#)3. (U) Summary: The U.S. delegation to the 2010 African Union (AU) Summit, led by Under-Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs Maria Otero, met with AU Chairperson Jean Ping and AU Peace and Security Commissioner Ramtane Lamamra on January 31 in Addis Ababa. The meeting touched upon a range of topics of mutual interest to the U.S. and the AU, including: the need for more AMISOM troop contributing countries and the importance of making AMISOM salaries commensurate with those of UN forces; the added value of Thabo Mbeki in resolving the crisis in Sudan; steps to assure a smooth transition in Guinea; initiatives to protect Burundi's fragile success; the need to combat narco-trafficking; and the commitment o:GQQns to mediate and resolve crises

around the African continent. He cited Madagascar and Guinea as key examples, and went on to say that there is no more important area of concern in the region than Somalia. He urged Ping to ask the AU's European partners for funds to make the salaries of African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) troops commensurate with other UN forces. Ping said that the AU is making progress on

15. (SBU) Ping said that the AU is making progress on increasing the number of troop contributing countries (TCCs).

According to Ping, Djibouti just increased its pledge from one battalion to two. During the AU Summit, South African President Jacob Zuma told Ping that he had received no request for troops, but indicated that he would be ready to contribute troops once the World Cup, to be held in South Africa, is over. Ping also noted that Nigeria promised a battalion, but has yet to deliver because the country is occupied with the situation in the Niger Delta.

16. (SBU) A/S Carson noted that the U.S. provides significant support to Somalia and the Transitional Federal Government

ADDIS ABAB 00000287 002 OF 003

(TFG) and will help Uganda with a fourth battalion. However, he also said that African countries need to bring existing capacity to Somalia, and named Angola as an example of a nation that might be able to do this. Ping responded by saying that the AU has spoken to the Angolan government, which prefers not to get involved in conflicts that take place more than 2000 km from Angolan borders. Ping noted that, despite this stance, Angola plans to go to Guinea-Bissau, establishing a precedent for Angola to play a role further afield in Africa. While Angola has intervened in countries such as Congo on a bilateral basis, Ping believes the country's actions would be more credible if it worked with the AU or UN. "We will slowly move them to join international forces," he said, observing that Angola has a good army, "more disciplined than Nigeria."

SUDAN

17. (C) Turning to Sudan, an amused Ping described how he set a trap to get UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to attend breakfast that morning with Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir. Zuma, Ethiopia's Menkerios and Ibrahim Gambari, and the joint UN-AU mediator for Darfur, Djibril Bassole, are good, "but Mbeki is better" and has the confidence of the stakeholders. Meles reportedly told Ban to see former South African President Thabo Mbeki as a plus. Ping concluded the discussion of Sudan by saying that the influence of the U.S. in South Sudan is greater than anyone's, and that post-referendum efforts must start immediately.

GUINEA

18. (SBU) After Ping thanked A/S Carson for his efforts in restoring order in Guinea, he observed that former coup leader Dadis Camara is a problem and people fear his return to Guinea. A/S Carson responded that the USG would do what it can to keep the transition smooth, and appreciated the collaboration that occurred between the U.S., France, Morocco, and the AU to resolve the situation in Guinea. He said that we have to ensure that Camara does not return to Guinea, but instead remains in Ouagadougou or finds another home, perhaps further away from Africa. A/S Carson then outlined three steps that the USG would take to assist with Guinea's transition: 1) Help restructure the military, with help from U.S. African Command (AFRICOM); 2) Reopen development assistance; 3) Money for elections. Ping declared such initiatives good, as the army and Camara are his two main fears.

BURUNDI

¶9. (SBU) Special Advisor for the Great Lakes Howard Wolpe raised the issue of Burundi, which he believes is a success story. He registered his concern, however, that success could be jeopardized by a void in international oversight of the peace process. He stated that the Burundian government had asked Youssef Mahmoud, the head of the UN Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB), to leave, and that the South African protection mission also was gone. Wolpe noted in addition that some hard-liners in The National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) no longer feel secure, and there is an upsurge in intimidation and party-driven youth confrontation. Wolpe recommended that the AU and/or the East African Community (EAC) pursue two initiatives: 1) Send election observers to Burundi quickly and in large numbers to respond to the Burundian president's request and 2) create an alternative mechanism for international facilitation to deal with

ADDIS ABAB 00000287 003 OF 003

problems that might arise. Ping agreed that Burundi is a success story, but remains fragile. As evidence, he shared news of an attempted coup the night before.

NARCO-TRAFFICKING

¶10. (SBU) NSC Senior Director for African Affairs Michelle Gavin asked Ping to describe the AU's thinking on how to build a strategy to more effectively combat narco-trafficking, a problem that is increasing in West Africa in particular. Ping replied that West Africa is complex, with terrorism running from Mauritania to Somalia. He lamented the fact that Africa is stuck as a transit point between Latin America, as the supplier, and Europe as the final market for illegal drugs. He said that the Arab world and Africa have met to discuss the issue, but feel they are not listened to. They need to do something, but "the problem is too strong for us alone." USAU Ambassador Battle told participants that members of the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and of AFRICOM met with their counterparts at the AU on January 21 to examine narco-trafficking and the spill-over into terrorism (ref. B).

CLIMATE CHANGE

¶11. (SBU) U/S Otero raised the issue of climate change, stating that the accord reached in Copenhagen is the first step to moving forward, even if questions and challenges remain. She clearly stated that she was putting the issue before Ping so that he would encourage African countries to sign on. Ping lauded the ten-person team, led by Meles, that negotiated on Africa's behalf in Copenhagen, saying it was the first time the team had spoken with one voice. Ping said that Africa would prepare for upcoming meetings in Bonn and Mexico in the same spirit.

¶12. (SBU) At the same time, Ping acknowledged that "some people on the team don't understand the process." He gave the example of a president who brought in NGOs to contribute to debate, but whose vision differed from what the team had discussed. Ping named adaptation as the main issue and said that Africa needs to move quickly to green energy, but requires the finances to buy needed technology from the north. He highlighted Gabon, whose decision to stop cutting trees resulted in the collapse of the timber industry, which had been the country's primary industry and now needs to be replaced. Despite such challenges, Ping assured his listeners that African countries are committed to climate change efforts and have potential in areas such as solar,

hydrothermal, and biomass. He specifically named the Congo Basin countries as being on board and described Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade's plan to plant 7000 km of trees from Dakar to Djibouti. He commented that, "we won't go to shout about adaptation," but will focus on technology transfer instead.

¶13. (U) Ping closed the meeting by repeating his familiar refrain; given from where Africa has come and the results it has achieved, it is faring better than many other regions of the world, including Latin America. Fiji has had five coups, he observed, "but here we have many successes stopping this."

¶14. (U) A/S Carson has not cleared this cable.

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